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ABSTRACT

Instructional evaluation by students is viewed as one of the main vehicles to improve teaching-learning processes in higher education. There is also a growing trend to use this information for administrative purposes such as tenure, promotion and merit pay. On the other hand, reviews of research show almost consistently that written feedback from students, when given without any additional treatment, is not effective in achieving behavioral changes and improving teaching-learning processes. This paper provides explanations why there are slim chances that written or oral feedback alone will be effective in modifying behavior. In developing a theoretical conceptualization of instructional evaluation the author analyzes the role of teaching in higher education and the reward structure in the university organization; theories of feedback, motivation, behavioral and organization change, self-efficacy and attribution. Drawing on research in teacher education, training, coaching and faculty development, the paper points towards effective faculty development programs which entail multiple sources of feedback and confrontation techniques and which have better chances of improving teaching-learning processes in higher education in spite of a non-supportive organizational environment. (Author/PN)

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Towards a Theoretical Conceptualization of Instructional Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

TOWARDS A THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL EVALUATION

Instructional evaluation by students is viewed as one of the main vehicles to improve teaching-learning processes in higher education. Due to budgetary constraints it became, in many cases, the only activity designed to improve teaching. There is also a growing trend to use this information for administrative purposes such as tenure, promotion and merit pay.

On the other hand, reviews of research show almost consistently that written feedback from students, when given without any additional treatment, is not effective in achieving behavioral changes and improving teaching-learning processes. There are also growing objections to its use for administrative decisions.

Relatively very little consideration has been given to the development of a comprehensive theoretical conceptualization of instructional evaluation. The existing assumptions underlying instructional evaluation are that by providing feedback about undesirable behavior, the person receiving the feedback will change his behavior. Drawing on available theoretical knowledge in various fields of psychology and education, this paper provides explanations why there are slim chances that written or oral feedback alone will be effective in modifying behavior.

In developing a theoretical conceptualization of instructional evaluation the author analyzes the role of teaching in higher education and the reward structure in the university organization; theories of feedback, motivation, behavioral and organization change, self-efficacy and attribution. Drawing on research in teacher education, training, coaching and faculty development, the paper points towards effective faculty development programs which entail multiple sources of feedback and confrontation techniques and which have better chances of improving teaching-learning processes in higher education in spite of a non-supportive organizational environment.

TOWARDS A THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL EVALUATION

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INSTRUCTIONAL EVALUATION

The State of the Art

Surveys of the literature on higher education and an analysis of proceedings of national and international conferences in the area of higher education indicate that programs referring to the evaluation, assessment and rating of instructors or instructions in post-secondary education are very popular. I will refer to them in the paper as instructional evaluation.

A voluminous number of technical research articles and reports, general qualitative articles, and reviews of the literature have been published in this area. In addition, a number of whole books or specific chapters in books dealing with higher education have been devoted to instructional evaluation. Aleamoni (1974) refers to this phenomenon as a "plethora of research that spans at least fifty years." Moreover, Aleamoni states that many of the questions and problems raised during these years have not as yet received adequate answers.

Faculty development, and in particular instructional evaluation, has expanded very rapidly from the late 1960s and through the 1970s (Centra, 1976). According to a 1972 survey conducted by the American Council on

education, two-thirds of all institutions of higher education reported that student evaluations were gathered in nearly all of their departments (Blank, 1978). Bejar (1975) describes the "dramatic upsurge" in the collection and use of student evaluation of instruction which took place in colleges and universities across the country in the last decade. More recently, Cohen too refers to the "dramatic increase" in the use of student ratings in the last decade (Cohen, 1980).

From recent informal testimonials of faculty developers at national and international conferences, it appears that the current budget stringencies in higher education either have caused the elimination of many faculty development centres, or else have reduced the scope of their activities. On the other hand, there are those who testify that instructional evaluation is almost the only activity to have survived budgetary decisions to phase out or reduce faculty development programs. This latter phenemonon should not come as a surprise. In this age of advanced computer technology, the administration of an instructional evaluation is relatively simple and inexpensive. In some universities, it is the only activity left of a wide range of faculty development programs, and its survival enables the administration to claim that the university is still committed to the improvement of teaching.

For example, in discussing the future of teaching improvement programs, given the potential demise of the Office of Educational Development (OED) in a large metropolitan universitiy with an enrolment of over 40,000 students, the Vice-Provost recently was quoted as saying, "teaching effectiveness will continue to be scrutinized both departmentally and through teaching evaluation, in tenure, promotion and merit award decisions" (Adelman, 1982). Ironically, the failure of the OED's

three-member staff to play a "central role" in the university, and its lesser importance in the "scheme of things," were targetted as reasons for placing the department low on a list of budgetary priorities.

The current trend toward reducing faculty development programs was forecasted in the 1970s during the euphoric heydays of the faculty development movement. Popham (1974) criticized higher education's commitment to instructional improvement as "tokenistic and half-hearted efforts," unlikely to increase the instructional capabilities of most faculty members. He viewed prevailing programs as "meek medicine for a major affliction," and argued that higher education's commitment to instructional improvement was "largely political, stemming more from public relations motives than from a genuine desire to bring about increased faculty effectiveness." He anticipated the need for instructional development agencies to obtain more power if they were to have any effect, and argued that "university officials, administrators and faculty must have greater commitment to the improvement of instruction, giving the agency enough personnel and financial resources."

Perlberg (1972, 1979) also cautioned faculty developers, stating that "the impressive growth of instructional development agencies and of evaluation of instruction may be deceiving and pacifying to those involved directly in the programs, to administrators and to the public at large." Unfortunately for the cause of improving teaching-learning in post-secondary education, these prophecies have begun to be realized.

The Lack of a Theoretical Conceptualization

Since the early days of the instructional evaluation "movement" over 50 years ago, researchers, instructional evaluators and faculty developers

in general, have been mainly concerned with problems in two major broad areas. The first problem area is concerned with defusing the concept that students as clients have the right to provide their teachers with feedback about the teaching-learning process, that they are able to do it, and that this feedback could facilitate the improvement of teaching. The second area is concerned wwith methodological and technical problems of designing evaluation instruments to obtain reliable and valid student feedback, and developing methods for the efficient distribution of this feedback to the faculty. In addition, researchers must be concerned with the organizational and practical problems of the "do's" and "don'ts" in instructional evaluation. Very little consideration has been given to a better understanding of the phenomenon of giving and receiving feedback in the context of the academic organization. Does it have an impact, and what is it? If it does achieve its goals, why and how? If it does not achieve its goals, the question is again, why? These unanswered questions stem from the fact that relatively little consideration has been given to the development of a comprehensive theoretical conceptualization of the phenomenon. Such conceptualization would be attained by applying available theoretical knowledge from various fields such as psychology, organizational theory, training research, and education, and by research aimed at contributing new insights into the process of instructional evaluation and its effects on behavioral changes. It stands to reason that such theoretical conceptualization will lead toward better utilization of the techniques and improve the teaching-learning process. In a recent major review of the literature, Rotem and Glasman (1979) touch upon these problems and advocate further research that will provide answers to some of these questions and facilitate a theoretical conceptualization.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss some aspects which, it is hoped, will facilitate a better understanding of the phenomenon and will lead towards its theoretical conceptualization. Before proceeding with this discussion, it is essential to re-examine the prevailing rationale and purposes of instructional evaluation as presented in the literature and the research findings regarding its effectiveness.

Instructional Evaluation--Terminology and Frames of Reference

The literature provides a degree of latitude in the use of terminology regarding instructional evaluation processes, making it essential to clarify our own use of terms. As stated above, we refer to processes described in the literature as: evaluation, assessment, rating and providing feedback or reporting about instructors and instructional processes in post-secondary education, that can be provided by students, peers, administrators, or consultants. We do not use the general term of "faculty evaluation" (Seldin, 1980), since it implies overall evaluation of faculty, including roles and tasks other than instruction. However, it should be noted that the theoretical discussion on the nature of feedback and motivation for change, apply to these other roles and tasks as well. As indicated above, instructional evaluation can be obtained from various sources, but in citing the literature, the discussion will focus on student evaluation of instruction, as there is very scanty information on the role of others in this process.

It is important to note the significance of semantics and the psychological implications in the use of terms such as: evaluation versus feedback and reporting or evaluation of instructors versus evaluation of instruction. Terms such as evaluation may have a negative connotation for

many professors. By shifting the focus from instructor to instruction, we may alleviate some feelings of being "attacked". Being sensitive to this problem, Menges (1979) suggested that term "student reporting" is less judgmental and threatening than evaluation. The problem, however, is that in some cases the term "reporting" can also be heavily loaded with negative perceptions through childhood memories of "report cards", many of which were very judgmental and threatening, that can carry over to adult life. Perlberg (1981) prefers a different terminology and a new model entitled, "A Qualitative Clinical Analysis and Development of Teaching-Learning Processes," which, in his opinion, should be the main vehicle toward the improvement of teaching-learning processes in post-secondary education.

Rationale and Purposes of Instructional Evaluation

The literature suggests the following as the most prevalent purposes of instructional evaluation processes: (1) providing feedback to teachers for the purpose of improving instruction; (2) aiding administrative evaluation of teaching effectiveness for decisions concerning pay increase, promotion and tenure; and (3) helping students select courses and instructors (Cohen, 1980; Menges, 1979). A fourth purpose, suggested by Seldin (1980), is to provide data to concerned off-campus individuals and organizations. As Seldin points out, "taxpayers, parents, government officials, boards of trustees and a wide range of advocacy groups have demanded all sorts of data on instructional and faculty efficiency."

According to Seldin, many states have enacted legislation that requires colleges and universities to prepare and maintain detailed records on hiring, promotion, tenure and retention. He also quotes the Massachusetts Advisory Council on Education, which recommended that

institutions on their own initiatives, "collect and disseminate overall effectiveness information on students served, student learning and satisfaction." Those data are partly reflected in instructional evaluation programs. One purpose for keeping a good set of records, containing the data suggested by the Council, is that institutions "have a better chance of surviving in the hot competition in higher education."

The purpose of providing data to outsiders is viewed also as a way of responding to the pressures of the "accountability movement" that had baffled educators in the last decade. The impact of that "movement" on faculty development programs during the 1970s is reflected in instructional evaluation, which became one of the most important components of these programs. According to Centra (1976), "the general disenchantment--expressed by students, parents, and legislators--with the quality of college instruction" has increased the pressures placed on publicly-funded educational institutions to become more accountable for their teaching practices. In some states funds have been earmarked for the improvement of college instruction, and a 1972 recommendation of the National Advisory Council on Education Professions Development "singled out its need for more effective training of community college teachers."

For Rotem and Glasman (1977), the predominant feature of instructional evaluation "is, that it includes a dual set of foci, the improvement focus and the accountability focus." They maintain that, until recently, "a reasonable balance between the two foci has been maintained, but more recently the pressure for accountability has intensified and disrupted the balance." They also claim that the university's obligation to satisfy societal demands for accountability could be achieved by "heightening the priority of teaching" which, in turn, facilitates "the achievement of professional standards of faculty" (Glasman, 1976).

From their analysis of the literature, Knapper, Geis, Pascal and Shore (1977) argue that the major and perhaps the only valid reason for instructional evaluation is feedback for improvement of instruction. In supporting their view, Geis (1977) urges that:

> Evaluation be viewed primarily as providing diagnostic data to be used as a guide to improvement, and to indicate a state of progress toward a goal, in short the formative model is the appropriate one for evaluation efforts on campus. (p. 27)

Murray (1983) emphasizes Knapper, Geis, Pascal and Shore's point of view that the "universities have placed too much emphasis on summative uses of teacher evaluation data and not enough emphasis on formative uses of evaluation" (p. 30). He summarizes Knapper and his associates arguments against using teaching evaluation in salary promotion and tenure decisions as follows:

> (1) this practice is threatening and anxiety provoking to faculty;
>
> (2) it is improper to evaluate teaching for promotion and tenure purposes without providing adjunct training or assistance for individuals who receive poor evaluations and seek to improve their performance;
>
> (3) teaching evaluations are more likely to be used to punish poor performers than to reward good performers; and
>
> (4) no consideration is given to faculty members who receive poor evaluations initially but show substantial improvement over time.

Because of these problems, Knapper et al. recommend that a moratorium be placed on the use of teaching evaluation data (particularly student ratings) in promotion and tenure decisions.

McKeachie (1979) suggests an additional and relatively new purpose to those mentioned above: "stimulating students to think about their education." This purpose broadens the scope of the evaluation process to

encompass teaching-learning processes as a whole, and presents education as a joint responsibility of students and instructors. McKeachie suggests that "students should consider whether they have done all they could to make the course a valuable experience" before blaming the instructor for failure to achieve educational goals." Very little attention has been given by instructional evaluators to this aspect and, as noted above, a more elaborate discussion of this purpose and concept will be presented later on in the paper.

The Effectiveness of Instructional Evaluation

Seldin (1980), who titles his book, Successful Faculty Evaluation Programs, asks, "does faculty evaluation actually result in improved performance?" and responds that "the evidence is murky." Most reviewers of the literature on instructional evaluation and student ratings in the last decade concur that written feedback from students, without any additional treatment, is not effective in achieving behavioral changes in teachers or in improving the teaching-learning processes. Seldin is one of the most recent reviewers, but similar conclusions to those drawn by him were also drawn by others. Over a decade ago, Costin et al. (1971) emphasized the fact that there is insufficient evidence that student rating improves teaching. They could not cite reliable studies proving that changes had occurred in faculty who had received feedback, saw discrepancies, experienced dissonance and developed needs. On the contrary, they cite evidence that teachers who were rated "good" and teachers who were rated "poor" at the beginning of the year were rated the same way by the same students at the end of the year: that is, the status quo was apparently

maintained. Menges (1973), states that "unfortunately, evidence is mixed about the effects on teaching by providing student rating information to teachers." He concludes that "the likelihood of changes is increased of course if the institution provides resources and training programs for its faculty."

Aleamoni (1974) also states that there is no clear-cut evidence to show that feedback does have an effect on instruction. However, he cites results from his own study showing a significant increase in student ratings of faculty rated lowest on two subscales subsequent to discussions with a measurement and evaluation expert. Conversely, faculty who had not availed themselves of expert consultation achieved unchanged subscale ratings on subsequent evaluation. According to Seldin (1980), the Massachusetts Advisory Council on Education (1975) found that helping faculty to improve performance, although at the top of the list of intended purposes of faculty evaluation, "typically falls short as a demonstrated accomplishment."

Centra (1977), who surveyed faculty development directors at 756 colleges and universities, found that "between 40 to 60 percent of the respondents saw the evaluation process as being effective in improving teaching." Centra cautions, however, that the survey respondents' views "may be based less on hard evidence than on general optimism."

Based on their extensive review of the literature, Rotem and Glasman (1979) conclude that "feedback from student ratings . . . does not seem to be effective for the purpose of improving performance of university teachers." They are aware of the fact that in some studies carried out in non-university levels, statistically significant results were obtained, but these changes were not large enough to have an educational

significance. Citing Gage (1963), they claim that "half a point on a five point scale may be statistically significant but have little educational importance." Rotem and Glasman also stress that insufficient attention has been given by researchers to the effectiveness of students' ratings in improving university teaching.

McKeachie (1979) questions if "the ultimate test of the usefulness of student ratings as a measure for improving teaching is whether teaching becomes more effective as a result of student ratings?". The answer to this question is that the evidence is not clear: "some studies have reported no improvement, a few have reported positive results." From his analysis of the reasons for the failures of improvement following student feedback, it is possible to infer and understand his doubts and cautious attitude.

In summarizing the state of the art of instructional evaluation, McKeachie (1979) emphasizes that:

> No matter how technically sophisticated our questionnaires and our evaluation system, they are worthless if their use generates such conflict, anxiety, or confusion that education is affected adversely. Student ratings should not be used as the single measure of teaching. Rather we should think of them as data valuable for problem solving, and their impact upon the climate for teaching is more important than the technical excellence of the form to be used. (pp. 396-397)

Using a somewhat different set of studies, Abrami, Leventhal and Perry (1979) suggest:

> There seems to be enough evidence to conclude that feedback from student ratings leads some instructors to improve their subsequent student ratings. However, the effect is not reliable judging from the inconsistency of findings across studies. (p. 361)

Murray (1980), in summarizing his analysis of the literature, and in particular the findings of Erickson and Erickson (1979), Centra (1973), McKeachie (1976), Miller (1971), Pambookian (1974), Rotem (1978), and Thomas (1969), states that:

> Feedback from global-evaluative student rating forms is not, in and of itself, a particularly effective stimulus for the improvement of college teaching. . . On the other hand, student feedback which is supplemented by expert consultation, motivational and specific suggestions for improvement is more likely to lead to measurable gains in teaching performance.

In another recent review of the effectiveness of student rating feedback for improving college instruction, Cohen (1980) re-analyzed some of the studies considered in two previous major reviews of the literature (Abrami et al., 1979; Rotem & Glasman, 1979) by applying Glass's (1976) meta-analytic methodology. Cohen's analysis focused on three aspects of student rating feedback: (1) its effectiveness in the typical comparative study; (2) its effectiveness for certain dimensions of teaching; and (3) the conditions for its effectiveness. The efforts to improve instruction through evaluation were classified into two categories: (1) instructor development--the improvement of general teaching abilities in the instructor over time; and (2) within-class improvement--improvement in instructional effectiveness evidenced over the course of a semester.

Cohen opens his review on a positive note, indicating the appropriateness of student rating for within-class improvement. He cites previous work (Cohen & Herr, 1979) which identified advantages of within-class improvement strategies based on progressive improvement of instruction over a semester. These include instructor involvement in faculty development programs and rewards derived from positively received teaching-related experience. In Cohen's words, "implementation of

within-class improvement strategies should increase the instructor's sense of competence." Cohen refers to McKeachie (1979) and Bess (1977) who also stress the importance of enhancing the instructor's intrinsic motivation for teaching.

Cohen summarizes the findings in the literature by stating that while "there seem to be substantial support for using student ratings as a source of feedback, it is not clear how effective such information can be in terms of improving instruction." He refers to a number of reviewers who have noted mixed findings such as "significant influence of student-ratings feedback versus studies that did not show such effects." In particular he refers to Abrami et al. (1979) and Rotem and Glasman (1979), as being unable to draw firm conclusions from the literature in this area. Later on, he cites a number of researchers who identified various reasons for the ineffectiveness of student feedback, especially when provided without further treatment.

Finally, Cohen presents the results of his own research using Glass's meta-analysis. He starts with a cautious but postive note, stating that, "for the most part, student rating feedback has made a modest but significant contribution to the improvement of college teaching," which in his opinion refutes the findings of previous reviewers. It is important to note the use of the term "modest." Its use by Cohen becomes clearer when he presents further findings which correlate with those of other reviewers and researchers. He indicates that:

> When instructors are left to their own resources, ratings provide little help. Augmented feedback, or more specifically expert consultation, seems to be the key element for making student-rating data useable for improvement purposes. It is also clear that instructional change cannot be accomplished on all teaching dimensions. Therefore, instructors should only request

> midterm student feedback for aspects of teaching that they are able to modify. Finally, rating items and dimensions that supply specific information should be preferred to global ratings. (pp. 338-339)

Given these considerations or reservations, Cohen believes that student ratings are a valuable data source for improving instruction at the college level. It is unlikely that one would argue that student feedback when coupled with other data sources and different interventions, could facilitate improvement of teaching learning processes. The issue, however, is whether student feedback by itself could have this impact. It seems that even the sophisticated statistical analysis used by Cohen could not yield strong support for such an assumption, and that what is considered by many to be axiomatic, still needs a proof.

Moral and Ethical Dilemmas of Faculty Developers and Administrators

The reviews of research on instructional evaluation, cited above, almost consistently show that written feedback from students, when given to university faculty without augmented treatment such as focussed consultation and some training activity, is not effective in achieving behavioral changes or improving teaching-learning processes. There also are ample warnings in the literature against the over-emphasis on information obtained through instructional evaluation procedures when used for administrative purposes. These warnings are most vocal when the same information obtained from students to serve improvement purposes is used by administration for accountability purposes. (McKeachie, 1979; Menges, 1979; Cammann, 1982)

Despite the abundance of disappointing research results, the "evaluation movement" is growing in popularity, at least to the extent that it has survived the budgetary restrictions which have limited faculty development programs or phased them out entirely.

It is possible to question the professional morality and ethics of an academic system, and its faculty developers, when public resources are spent on a treatment which is known to have little chance of success unless coupled with further and more intensive treatments. Moreover, the severity of the moral and ethical dilemma increases if we consider that the role of instructional evaluation in the improvement processes is to activate, arouse, create some stress and dissatisfaction with existing teaching-learning processes, and eventually motivate the person to engage in change. But what happens to the teacher who, as a result of this feedback, is motivated to do something about his teaching? In many universities he would learn through a "lonely" faculty developer or "somebody" in the system who administers the instructional evaluation program, that the system cannot provide intensive training needed to improve his skills, but rather expects him to find his own means of improving the teaching-learning process.

The teacher whose attitudes towards the idea of improvement of teaching are positive, is inclined to develop negative attitudes towards the system which is half-heartedly committed to this purpose. Such a teacher soon recognizes the naivete of perceiving the system as supportive, and is likely to be torn between the need to do something about the improvement of the teaching-learning processes and his inability to fulfill this need. On the other hand, the "cynical" teacher already is protected by the view that the system is not seriously

concerned with teaching quality, and thus is not unduly concerned by its lack of available assistance.

An analogy drawn from the medical and health services will illustrate the absurdity of the prevailing uses of instructional evaluation. The purpose of medical and health centres is to cure the sick, prevent illness and promote good health. To achieve these purposes, a system of diagnostic support services such as x-rays and laboratories are available. Their main purpose, apart from research, is to provide service to physicians and clinicians, that in turn, assures the existence of the facility. Indeed, in some limited areas, the aid of modern technology enables patients to relieve the health care system of routine tasks such as measuring blood pressure, sugar levels, diagnose some other problems, and even administer self-treatment. The high cost of medical services on the one hand, and the rapid development of simple diagnostic devices on the other, will probably widen the range of "self-help procedures" which in turn will lead toward greater use of self-diagnosis and self-prescription or treatment. But these new developments will be preceded by extensive research, and testing of the effectiveness of these procedures in alleviating health problems. The medical profession and health authorities are very careful in this respect, both for ethical and legal reasons.

By comparison, instructional evaluation provides clients with a generalized and sometimes very vague statement of the problems, which is far from the detailed diagnostic reports provided to the medical practitioner or client. As for treatment, even in the halcyon days of faculty development, the forms of treatment were far from effective, and, as will be discussed later in greater length, did not have the potential

of achieving significant change. In the present days of budget stringencies, faculty are being told to "do it themselves," even though there is an awareness that they lack the proper knowledge, tools and environment for effective "self-treatment." Moreover, instructional evaluation for improvement purposes, even if carried out with well designed quantitative and qualitative techniques, is only one source of diagnostic information that can be applied in designing programs of clinical consultations and training strategies.

Another aspect of the medical analogy relates to motivation. The people involved in medical self-diagnosis and self-treatment, are highly motivated to engage in it. Their motivation ranges from sheer need for survival, better health or simple convenience, and economic factors. This is not the case with university faculty, most of whom are not motivated to engage in activities designed to improve teaching-learning processes and their attitude towards instruction and evaluation are influenced greatly by this lack of motivation.

The most alarming development in recent times is the substitution of instructional evaluation for faculty development programs, in the effort to have an impact on the campus. For the sake of maintaining good relationships between faculty developers and the university administration, or for the sheer survival of existing faculty development centres, many faculty developers and administrators are falling into the trap of equating large quantities of faculty rating forms, completed by students, as evidence of activities designed to improve teaching-learning processes, while ignoring the research demonstrating that this is but one step in a long and tedious process in the improvement process. This may be a case of confusing the "message" with the "medium."

In discussing the moral and ethical dilemmas of faculty developers and administrators using instructional evaluation, it is essential to differentiate between different groups and their different motivations. One group can be characterized as the "Machiavellians." This group knows what the research literature has to say about the ineffectiveness of instructional evaluation programs, but continues to administer it to satisfy public relations, survival or administrative needs. On the other hand, the second, "naive" group, tends to believe in the effectiveness of instructional evaluation and administer it as a matter of inertia. "It has been on the campus for so many years, and we have the mechanism!" Consciously or subconsciously, they tend to ignore research evidence, believing that it does not apply to their case. There is also a third group. These are the responsible and conscientious faculty developers and administrators who are fully aware of the weaknesses of the present system of instructional evaluation programs, and also are aware of ways to optimize these systems. In some cases, they succeed in utilizing instructional evaluation as a component of a more comprehensive and intensive program, but in other cases, they are caught in a dilemma of "to be or not to be." They are torn between the demands of the system to at least do something that might stir some interest and have visibility, and their conscience which tells them that chances are slim that the procedures will yield results. They are willing to consult, advise and conduct a range of activities with faculty which, when coupled with evaluation, will yield results. To put it in Lewin's (1948) terms, they are caught in a conflict between their "super ego" (i.e., the way they should behave) and their "ego" (i.e., the way they are able to behave

according to circumstances). Many are even ridden with guilt feelings for being engaged in activities which they know have a slim chance of yielding results.

Why Instructional Evaluation Programs Are Not Effective In Improving Teaching-Learning Processes

The answer to the question, why are instructional evaluation programs not effective in improving teaching learning processes, lies in the basic assumption underlying the question; that is, that student feedback in itself, without supplemental intensive treatment, can modify a complex and intricate social behavior such as the teaching-learning process. Unfortunately, this simplistic and somewhat naive assumption is not limited to instructional evaluation programs but to the whole concept of faculty development and its role in improving the teaching-learning process. For a better understanding of the ineffectiveness of instructional evaluation programs in improving teaching-learning processes, it is useful to analyze the psychological meaning of the concepts of "improvement" and "feedback", and of the interaction between them. Several other psychological concepts and their theoretical relationship to the basic concepts of improvement and feedback also will have to be discussed.

Improvement as a Process of Change and Re-education

Improvement of teaching-learning processes, as well as faculty development, could be regarded as a process of change and re-education. It is therefore valuable to adopt Lewin's (1948) analysis of this process. Lewin differentiates between three levels of change -- cognitive,

attitudinal and behavioral -- and states that the re-educative process frequently reaches only the first two levels, while the third is not significantly affected. Further, he warns that achieving cognitive and attitudinal changes without facilitating behavioral changes may cause more harm than good by developing a conflict between the "super ego" and the "ego". In order to resolve this inner conflict and protect oneself from guilt feelings and frustration, Lewin argues that people tend to resort to a variety of defense mechanisms.

Lewin and his colleagues developed their concepts of re-education and change in the early 1940's through a series of experimental investigations on changing social behavior. Their findings and conceptualizations were largely responsible for subsequent development in group dynamic research, training laboratories in the behavioral sciences, and experiential learning systems. The basic message emerging from this research was that achieving behavioral change is, in general, a complex process which involves perceptions, cognitions, attitudes, emotions and a variety of other factors that influence the various persons participating in these processes.

Following Lewin's model, Schein (1972) developed a change model to suit macro situations in organizations as well micro situations in individuals. According to this model, the following stages and mechanisms are needed to achieve significant behavioral changes (as quoted in Bess, 1982, pp. 196-197):

Stage 1: Unfreezing Creation of the motivation to change.
Mechanisms:

1. Lack of confirmation or disconfirmation of present belief, attitudes, values, or behavior patterns.
2. Induction of "guilt-anxiety" by comparison with ideal states.
3. Creation of psychological safety by the reduction of threats or removal of barriers to change.

Stage 2: Changing Developing new beliefs, attitudes, values, and behavior patterns on the basis of new information obtained and cognitive redefinition.
Mechanisms:

1. Identification with a particular source of information and redefinition through perceiving things as the source perceives them.
2. Scanning multiple sources of information and redefinition through new integration of information.

Stage 3: Refreezing Stabilizing and integrating new beliefs, attitudes, values, and behavior patterns into the rest of the system.
Mechanisms:

1. Integrating new responses into ongoing significant relationships and into total social system through reconfirmation by significant others.

Both Lewin's conceptualization and Schein's model vividly illustrate the failure to recognize complexities of the tasks and processes of change by many of the people involved in faculty development and improving teaching-learning processes in higher education.

Until the late 1960's most activities in faculty development centres that were designed to improve teaching-learning processes were limited to dissemination of written materials, lectures, symposia, conferences on teaching problems and the administration of instructional evaluation programs. These, at best, achieved cognitive and attitudinal changes and very rarely behavioral change. When cognitive and attitudinal changes were achieved, and when faculty realized the need to improve and even became intrinsically motivated to do so, they usually lacked significant systematic help and advice on how to do it. Most important, they lacked a safe practice ground to try out the new behaviors. Most of the centers and agencies for faculty development were understaffed, particularly in the availability of clinical consultants, even though this was in the heyday of faculty development when many universities had faculty

development centers. With growing budgetary constraints causing centers to be phased out or their activities curtailed, even "superficial" clinical consultation becomes rare and intensive training programs impossible.

At present it seems that most activities designed to improve teaching-learning processes are geared mainly to those who are highly motivated in spite of the non-rewarding conditions. In order not to discourage them, programs are needed to assure behavioral change in the classroom as well as cognitive and attitudinal changes.

Other Factors Which Make It Difficult To Improve Teaching-Learning Processes

As stated earlier there are innate complexities and intricacies in the teaching-learning process in higher education which make it difficult to facilitate even simple changes, in the existing format, particularly when one attempts to change significant patterns in order to improve. In addition, there has been a growing awareness among some researchers as well as faculty developers, that university teachers are not the only ones to determine the quality of the teaching-learning process. Thus, focusing all efforts on the improvement of faculty teaching skills, even if when done with most promising methods does not assure overall improvement. There are other partners in the process -- the students and the academic organization. Efforts need to be directed towards them as well, if significant improvement is to be achieved.

University teachers are not alone in having to learn how to facilitate good learning, students also have to learn how to learn at the

university, since learning in this context is different from their previous learning experiences. Recent research on student learning in Higher Education (Entwistle, 1981; Wilson, 1981; Marton, 1982) has revealed the importance of understanding students' learning styles and strategies for the improvement of the teaching-learning process. Moreover, the research suggested that in order to improve learning, students have to be aware of their own learning styles and strategies. They must know what facilitates good learning experiences and what hinders them and they have to develop and improve their learning skills. Although the need to improve student study skills has been recognized for many years, the recent emphasis is on student awareness of their learning strategies and improvement of learning skills (Gibbs, 1981).

The university organization is an equally important partner. The recruitment, development and utilization of faculty as facilitators of learning also is determined by the organization. There is a growing awareness that any significant change in the quality of the teaching--learning process will require significant changes in the organization's policies in this area (Bess, 1982). The organization also controls other factors which determine the quality of the teaching-learning process ranging from the overall goals and objectives through the curriculum, methods of teaching, evaluation procedures and allocation of resources and facilities. The ineffectiveness of instructional evaluation programs in significantly affecting the teaching-learning process should not, therefore, be attributed only to the innate complexities of this particular process and the faculty, but to the other partners as well. Thus, effective faculty development programs must be geared to all partners involved in the process.

Theoretical and Conceptual Aspects of Instructional Evaluation

Feedback as a Cybernetic Process

Webster's dictionary (1981) defines feedback as:

> 1. the return to the input of a part of the output of a machine, system or process (as for producing changes in an electronic circuit that improve performance or in an automatic control device that provides self corrective action).
>
> 2a. the partial reversion of the effects of a process to it's source or to a preceeding stage.
>
> 2b. the return to a point of origin of evaluative or corrective information about an action or process.

From the above definition it appears that the term feedback is derived from basic concepts in disciplines such as cybernetics, systems approach, information processing and automation. It refers mainly to processes in which messages sent in a closed loop system can react to, change, or correct a course of action or behavior. The reference is, in general, to linear settings in which the system is programmed to change or react automatically in a predictable manner. For example, certain aspects of human growth, development and behavior are programmed by nature to react automatically upon receiving feedback messages. Automated processes in industrial production are programmed by human beings to changhe a course of action upon receiving feedback. Computers could be programmed to respond to feedback, even in non-linear situations and perform a variety of complex decision-making processes. In all of the examples cited above, and similar ones which were not cited, the key concepts are: advanced programming and predictable automatic process of decision making and correction.

Feedback in Human Organizations

Feedback systems are also applied in complex human organizational settings. Cammann (1982), relying on Freedman and Stumpf (1978) and Stumpf (1979), define these terms as:

> "any standardized set of organizational practices and procedures that routinely collect and distribute information about organizational activities with the goal of facilitating effective organizational performance. Budgets, quality control systems, and formalized management-by-objectives (MBO) programs, provide examples in industrial organizations". (Cammann p. 86)

According to Cammann, some of the rating systems used by students or others to assess courses in colleges and universities fit the above definition of feedback systems.

Cammann describes feedback systems as having three primary components that determine the way in which they function: (1) an information collection system; (2) an information distribution system; and (3) a set of objectives or standards. While all instructional evaluation programs possess the first two components, many of them lack a clear set of objectives or standards. Many of the objections voiced by opponents of instructional evaluation are based on that fact. The main questions raised are: What constitutes an effective teaching-learning process? What is the role of the university teacher in this process? Unfortunately, the answers to these questions are controversial. Moreover, whether on the basis of educational philosophy or sheer academic freedom, there is objection to using a prescribed set of standardized objectives or teaching-learning methods that are determined by the administration.

Instructional Evaluation as a Feedback System

Cammann's research has focused on ways people behave in different organizational settings, and on the effect of control systems on their behavior. Even though he tries to apply the basic concepts of feedback system to teachers, some of his generalizations do not fit the particular case of instructional evaluation in higher education. For example, Cammann states that "when the feedback system provides organization members with information on their own performance, it can provide an incentive to perform better or a source of internal satisfaction for job well done" (p. 88). The question that still remains is why this logical assumption which probably fits most human organizations does not fit faculty in colleges and universities.

Cammann suggests that involving people in the organization in "setting goals, identifying problems, developing solutions and monitoring their effectiveness" is a process that can increase the organization member's commitment and intrinsic motivation to perform well (Hackman and Oldham, 1980; Lowler and Rhode, 1976). Finally, Cammann discusses the use of feedback for reward and penalties, which is one of the main purposes of instructional evaluation in higher education. Relying on research in settings other than higher education, Cammann states that feedback can induce members of the organization to perform well on the feedback system measures or to "manipulate the measurement system by keeping the goals and standards low" (Cammann, 1976; Hofstede, 1967; Jasinski, 1956; Lawler and Rhode, 1976; Likert, 1967). Moreover, Cammann, relying on Argyris and Schon (1978), points to the potential of feedback systems in facilitating organizational learning, supporting experimentation and explaining new modes of behavior. However, he points

out that if "the system is used to punish failure and to reinforce efficient performance of specified outcomes through the use of standardized methods, the feedback system will inhibit learning and promote standardization" (p .88).

Some of the potentially negative aspects of using instructional evaluation for the purpose of reward and punishment were already mentioned above. In reflecting on Cammann's observations in other organizational settings, it is interesting to note that very little research is reported in the literature concerning attitudes and judgment of university faculty regarding students' feedback and the possible effects that this feedback has had on instructional practices (Kulik and McKeachie, 1975).

In one of the rare studies on this issue, Ryan, Anderson and Birchler (1980) have investigated faculty attitudes and subsequent instructional practices as a result of the use of feedback from instructional evaluation and personnel decisions such as retention, promotion, tenure and merit rating. The findings showed that the use of student feedback for personnel decisions reduced morale, job satisfaction and personal confidence in institutional administration, in a large proportion of the sample. The authors cautioned that these results should not be attributed to evaluation of faculty performance as such, since peer evaluation had been in effect in the institution for some years.

Their observations about changes in instructional practices, which coincide with Cammann's observation are more severe. Although there were some changes which could be considered as positive, such as increased identification of course objectives and use of handouts, the most frequent change was a reduction in coursework demands. "The difficulty level of courses and grading standards had been lowered by at least one third of the respondents" (p. 329), which resulted in grade inflation.

Ryan and his colleagues speak about a "belief expressed by a strong majority that academically irrelevant and possibly inappropriate practices" (p. 329) have occurred and that the use of this system would not promote further instructional improvement by the faculty. It is interesting to note that the faculty did not object to receiving confidential student feedback for the purpose of improvement of instruction. This does not assure that instruction will improve as a result of feedback, but at least there was no objection. The questions, issues and results of this study are limited and there is a need for further research in university settings. There are, however, great similarities between these results and the observations on feedback systems mentioned by Cammann. Moreover, similar observations with regard to instructional evaluation or feedback systems, especially when used for reward or punishment, for exerting pressure, threat, fear and anxiety, were already voiced in the literature by faculty developers.

Over two decades ago, Dressel (1960) identified similar problems, and more recently, in an analysis of The Rewards of Teaching, McKeachie (1982) discusses the negative rather than the positive effects of increased emphasis on evaluation. When "budget tightens and colleges and universities come under increased public scrutiny," they place greater emphasis on "accountability" and establish evaluation mechanisms for administering salary increases, promotion, retention, tenure and other "rewards and punishments" with the expectation that these will "result in improved effectiveness." McKeachie goes on to say that, "while there are, no doubt, some positive outcomes from emphasizing evaluation, there may also be unintended negative consequences. One of the effects of evaluation is to arouse anxiety". Since there are few, if any, studies

of faculty anxieties, McKeachie deduces from the many studies of anxiety about achievement among children and college students. According to McKeachie, research in this area indicates that:

> Anxiety is likely to have a damaging effect upon performance. Individuals who become anxious under the threat of evaluation are likely to be less creative, more rigid, less effective in solving problems, and to display more superficial, less effective methods of learning and processing information. Assuming that these results also apply to faculty members, we might expect that heavy emphasis on evaluation would result in performance designed to meet external standards. Articles will be published on conventional topics that can be addressed quickly to achieve frequent publications. Teaching is likely to be characterized by strong organization and methods that meet conventional standards. Heavy emphasis on evaluation may serve to reduce poor teaching resulting from inadequate preparation and in attention to the responsibilities of teaching. However, it is also likely to result in less innovation, less emphasis on long-term outcomes of education, and most important, less enthusiasm and commitment of the kind of extraordinary time and effort characterizing individuals who enjoy teaching and who are wrapped up in the enjoyable complexities of determining the best methods for teaching a particular subject matter to a particular group of students. (pp. 10-11)

Feedback as a Confrontation Process

The above discussion may create an impression that these consequences of feedback are limited to the uses of feedback for reward and punishment in administrative situations. This is not the case. From Cammann's observations, and his review of the literature of feedback systems and their effects in complex human organization, it is evident that feedback in human settings is much more complex than a cybernetic, information processing or cognitive phenomenon. Receiving and reacting to feedback is a complex human behavior which involves perceptions, cognitions, motivation, attitudes, concepts of self-efficacy and a variety of other factors that influence the behaviors of the person involved.

One way to understand the complex reaction to feedback is to view it as a confrontation process. Even though the term is borrowed from psychotherapy (Cohen 1982), it could also be applied to other settings. In the confrontation process, the person is provided with information or feedback about behavior which is being observed. This information will reveal things that may have been hidden from awareness or in other ways denied or even repressed. By receiving this information or feedback, the person usually discovers a dissonance: that is, a discrepancy between his goal, recalled experiences and the external feedback. In other words, the person may discover a discrepancy between the "ideal" image he has about himself and his interactions with others and the "real" image. In general, the discovery of this discrepancy, is both an activating and a motivating force which leads to its own reduction. However, this process of arousal may be stressful, frustrating and may even create dissatisfaction and a certain degree of unhappiness with the present situation, which is a precondition to any viable behavioral change. In some cases, when the person has a very low self image, the discovery of the discrepancy becomes a more pleasant experience and enhances self-esteem. In other cases the discrepancy may be very small, indicating that the person has a realistic view of himself. When the feedback is positive, even if the discrepancy is small, it could be an effective reward to motivate the advancement of goals and setting of new targets.

As stated above, confrontation theory could be applied in different settings. It stands to reason that the discovery of discrepancy through feedback and the dissonance phenomenon should motivate and activate faculty in higher education to narrow the gap and close the discrepancy.

But the research on the effectiveness of instructional evaluation, as cited above, indicates that the discovery of discrepancies through student feedback are not powerful enough to activate and motivate the faculty involved to close these discrepancies. Normal, emotionally healthy people have a need for self-actualization and fulfillment or as Maslow (1954, 1968, 1970) defined it: they want "to be what they could be", in whatever they are doing. The question that arises is how do university faculty resolve the conflict of continuing with their teaching roles if they know that they are not doing their best and at times are even doing very badly? How do they survive this mental stress and pressure by not closing the gap between the "ideal" and the "real"? Do they not have a need to actualize and fulfill themselves in their teaching roles? To understand this phenomenon and answer these questions, one must look into faculty's motivations, their perception of the university reward and incentive system, and their ability to utilize a variety of defense mechanisms in order to survive the contradicting forces and pressures they encounter in their multiple roles in the university organization.

Feedback and Motivation Theories

In a recent symposium on "Motivating Professors to Teach Effectively" (Bess, 1982a), a wide range of motivation theories were presented and many suggestions were offered as to how to motivate professors to improve their teaching and actualize themselves in their teaching role. But the task seems to be very difficult and whatever theory one applies to solutions, the basic dilemmas are the same. These are rooted in the underlying structure of the university organization and in the characteristics of the

typical faculty member who is trained, recruited, inducted, developed and rewarded to be a researcher rather than a teacher. Bess (1982b) sees the present structure of the university organization, and the way it recruits and rewards its faculty, as the greatest deterent to the improvement teaching. He also discusses other innate problems of university teaching, all of which make the improvement of teaching an "impossible mission". In his forward to the volume "Motivating Professors to Teach Effectively" Bess (1982a), states the following gloomy but very realistic observation about the problem of improving university teaching:

> Academics typically are not predisposed to seek and find satisfactions in teaching. Many have drifted into the profession out of love for research and knowledge acquisition--a task which requires that they put up with long periods of isolated behavior, at least, and that they enjoy it, at best. Thus, academicians are generally not predisposed to enjoy the social interaction which is central to teaching and learning. Once committed to the profession, they encounter teaching tasks about which they know little or nothing and which they find difficult and frustrating to perform. Faculty get little peer support, either in a practical or an emotional sense. Few significant others help them learn to teach or overcome their anxieties and frustrations, as still fewer demonstrate as role models the joys of teaching. Along with mass higher education have come new kinds of students whose skills and intellectual orientations are so different from those of faculty that a distance, if not antipathy, is likely to develop. Finally, along with reduced budgets come administrators whose positions as former faculty members have not afforded them much insight into the energy input-output balance--save as fellow sufferers. Now, forced to reallocate resources in response to pressures from many external sources and faced with a heavily tenured faculty, these administrators look to the development of incentives to induce faculty to perform tasks seen as burdensome, not fulfilling. (p. 4)

Bess further notes that the contributors to the motivation symposium are aware of these dilemmas and that their most important concern was the "development of conceptual frameworks which will help faculty and administrators to understand the causes and dilemmas and to develop enlightened policies to improve teaching" (p. 4). As discussed above, the

range of motivation theories is wide. Although some contributors, notably McKeachie, emphasize the importance of developing intrinsic motivation to help faculty derive satisfaction, joy and fulfilment through the teaching learning process, others, including Bess, put greater emphasis on the need for organizational changes which basically are extrinsic incentives. The advocates of extrinsic incentives do not deny the importance of intrinsic motivation, but argue that realistic views of the academic world suggest that most academics derive intrinsic rewards from their productive research activities, or even from their pseudo-research activities.

The problem of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation was addressed also by Murray (1983) who stated that:

> Also, one cannot help but wonder whether any form of student feedback can be expected to bring about substantial and widespread improvement in teaching unless there are tangible rewards for good teaching in salary, promotion, and tenure system. University professors are, for the most part, extremely talented and resourceful people who are capable of drastically improving their teaching if the reasons for so doing are sufficiently compelling. According to a survey conducted by Goldstein and Anderson (1977) junior faculty members at the University of Illinois believe that the underweighting of teaching in comparison to research in promotion and tenure decisions is the single most important deterrent to their doing a more effective job of teaching.

The limits of this discussion do not allow further deliberation of motivation theories and their relation to the improvement of teaching-learning processes. However, the most important implication from the foregoing discussion is that student feedback through instructional evaluation alone cannot be considered a powerful enough extrinsic incentive to motivate faculty to change and improve teaching-learning processes.

Feedback, Self-Efficacy and Attribution Theories

Bandura's recent conceptualization of Self-Efficacy theory (1978) and Attribution theories (Jone, et al, (eds) 1972; Shover, 1975; Harvey, et al, (eds) 1976, 1978; Frieze, et al, (eds) 1979; Weiner 1982), have contributed greatly to a better understanding of causes and change processes in human behavior. The reviews cited above do not include application of these theories to explain the behavior of faculty of higher education. Nevertheless, it would seem that some aspects of these theories could help in better understanding the impact of student feedback on the behavior of faculty and the improvement of teaching learning processes. Once again, the discussion will be limited to a few salient points selected to illustrate the potential contributions of these theories to the theoretical conceptualization of the main problem.

Self-Efficacy Theory

Bandura's basic assumption is that "psychological procedures, whatever their form, serve as means of creating and strengthening expectations of personal efficacy". Within this concept, Bandura differentiates between efficacy expectations and outcome expectations. In Bandura's terms outcome expectations are defined as a person's estimate that a given behavior will lead to certain outcomes; the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce that outcome is defined as the efficacy expectation.

According to Bandura, "efficacy expectations determine how much effort people will expand and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles" (p. 141). The strength of a person's conviction in his own effectiveness is likely to affect his coping ability and "the stronger

the perceived self-efficacy, the more active the efforts". It is important to stress that expectations alone will not produce desired performance if one lacks the component of capability. Moreover, Bandura does not overlook the role of motivation, which is essential for both activation and persistence of desired behaviors.

> Given appropriate skills and adequate incentives, however, efficacy expectations are a major determinant of people's choice of activities, how much effort they will expand, and of how long they will sustain efforts in dealing with stressful situations (p. 142). . . People process, weigh and integrate information, from various sources, concerning their capabilities and skills, the reward and punishment system, and regulate their choice of behavior and effort expenditure accordingly. (p. 158)

Another aspect of self-efficacy theory relates to the role of goal setting and self-evaluative reactions, which result in self-motivation (Bandura, 1976, 1977). "By making self-rewarding reactions conditional on attaining a certain level of behavior, individuals create self-inducement to persist in their efforts until their performances match self-prescribed standards" (p. 141). The cognitive processes of self-evaluation, and self-rewarding reactions are facilitated by feedback mechanisms which depend both on a person's own recall of the evaluated behavior and on the perceptions of others, especially those affected by the behavior. In line with self-confrontation and dissonance theory, Bandara also postulates that "perceived negative discrepancies between performance and standards create dissatisfaction that motivates corrective changes in behavior" (p. 141). Thus, the anticipated satisfactions of attaining desired standards on the one hand, and the perception of negative discrepancies on the other hand, could provide incentives for action. Moreover, in line with self-actualization and growth theories (Maslow, 1945, 1970), individuals who accomplish the level of performance they have set for themselves are no longer satisfied with it and "make further self-reward contingent on higher attainments".

Attribution theory

Another construct which could be of help in understanding the effectiveness of students feedback in improving teaching-learning processes is attribution theory. Friez and Bar-Tal (1979) define the attribution theorist as one who is "concerned with understanding naive perceptions of the causes of an event. . . by understanding naive or common-sense ideas about why people do the things they do, one could better predict the behavior and emotional reactions of people" (p. 2). The development of this concept is attributed to Heider (1944, 1958), who is regarded as the founder of attribution theory and who proposed the concepts of "social perception", "person perception" naive common-sense observation and attribution of casuality in human behavior.

Attribution theorists also study human motivation and achievement motivation in particular. Among these, Weiner (1972, 1974, 1976, 1979, 1982) is considered the leading researcher in applying the theory to educational settings. In formulating his most recent classification of the dimension of causality, Weiner (1982) has attempted to integrate, and to some extent modify, some of the concepts developed by Heider (1958) and Rotter (1966). Rotter had purposed that causality is uni-dimensional and defined by causes that were either within (internal) or outside (external) the person. This dimension, which Rotter termed "locus of control" has been widely adopted. Weiner (1982) contends that the concepts 'locus' and 'control' should be separated and prefers to describe Rotter's concept as "locus of causality".

Weiner suggests a new multi-dimensional classification for a person's perception of success and failure. He includes the dimensions focus, stability and controllability that can be classified as follows:

> Causes theoretically can be classified within one of eight cells: (2 levels of locus x 2 levels of stability x 2 levels of control). Among the internal causes, ability is stable and uncontrollable, typical effort is stable and controllable, mood, fatigue, and illness are unstable and uncontrollable; and temporary exertion is unstable and controllable. Among the external causes, task difficulty is stable and uncontrollable; teacher bias may be perceived as stable and controllable; luck is unstable and uncontrollable; and unusual help from others is unstable and controllable. (p. 227)

According to most attribution theorists, the effect of feedback concerning a person's success or failure in performing a certain task can only be understood in the context of the person's interpretations or attributions concerning the causes of success or failure. In explaining the outcome of a performance a set of inferences regarding the performer's abilities, dispositions, the characteristics of the task and the setting in which it was performed need to be developed. Successes and failures then can be understood in terms of these attributions.

Lepper and Dafoe (1982) propose an approach which deals with attributions concerning the reasons for engaging in particular activities. "Central to this approach is a distinction between actions perceived as intrinsically motivated and those perceived as extrinsically motivated". Deci (1971, 1975), and other attribution theorists, similarly have hypothesized that a person's attitudes and subsequent behavior toward an activity may be determined by the perceived motives to engage in this activity. Thus, if the engagement in the activity is perceived to be controlled by salient and powerful extrinsic contingencies, the person likely will attribute behaviors to these extrinsic constraints. This may be especially true when negative feedback results. More recently, Deci and Ryan (1982) have attempted to apply the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to the problem of motivating professors to teach in colleges and universities.

Very little seems to have been done in applying these theories and concepts to the issues under discussion. Thus the interpretations and generalizations which will be made in following sections should be regarded as tentative and subject to further research to demonstrate their validity in higher education settings. Another aspect that contributes to the tentativeness of the interpretations and generalizations is the lack of more data about the faculty about whom the interpretations and generalizations are made.

Implications For Higher Education

For the purpose of exploring the applicability of some of the theories discussed above to the major issue of this paper, consider the following hypothetical exercise. The attempt will be made to examine the thoughts and decision-making processes, the feelings and behaviors of an hypothetical faculty member upon receiving student feedback.

The first problem to be faced before starting the examination is the need for more data about this "hypothetical faculty member". For example, such data might include personal facts such as age, academic rank, state of tenure, family status and financial obligations; and personality data such as motivation and attitudes towards teaching students, interaction with others and role preferences in research and administration. In addition, it is useful to have factual data concerning the capabilities and skills of the faculty member to perform various roles and whether these are innate, learned and/or augmented by some professional interventions.

It should be stressed that the problem under consideration is not confined to research-oriented institutions in which there is a clear dichotomy between teaching and research. There is a need, therefore, for data about the setting: the type of institution, and whether it is teaching-oriented or research-oriented; the faculty member's department or school and its attitude and functional policy toward teaching as expressed in the reward system. This latter information is important even if it is known that the person works in a research-oriented university. The following example will illustrate the importance of this data.

In their analysis of the relation between organizational design and faculty motivation to teach, Hall and Bazerman (1982) cite two examples: the Harvard Business School (HBS) and the Graduate School of Industrial Administration at Carnegie-Mellan Universities (CMU). Both universities are highly regarded, elite, research-oriented institutions, but their business schools differ in perception, attitude, and functional policy towards teaching. HBS emphasizes quality of teaching at their graduate business programs and the reward system reflects this philosophy while MCU places its strongest emphasis in research quality and rewards it's faculty accordingly.

When seeking information about the "setting" one tends to think in terms of the institution, department, administration, policy etc. But the setting also includes the students who are partners in the processes. It is not accidental that throughout this paper reference was made to the improvement of teaching-learning processes rather than the teaching process alone. After all, the real purpose of higher education is to facilitate learning and direct teaching is but one variable which

facilitates learning. There is, therefore a need to know much more about the student body in general, and his students in particular, in order to understand our hypothetical faculty member's reactions to his students' feedback.

From the above hypothetical exercise it appears that the problem is much more complicated than previously assumed. Many variables interact with each other and determine the attitude and the resulting behavior of the persons involved. In the absence of desirable detailed information a discussion will have to be restricted to some of the major theoretical concepts mentioned above and their relation to the particular problems of this paper.

In applying Bandura's self-efficacy theory to the problem, the first and central question to be asked is whether university professors perceive their teaching role as the main vehicle to achieve their self-efficacy expectations. From the literature cited in the preceding discussion, it would seem that on one hand, the present structure of the system demands performance outcomes in three areas--research, teaching and service; but on the other hand it primarily recruits for, inducts into, and rewards the role of research (Bess, 1982). In this way, the system signals very clearly to its faculty that self-efficacy expectations shouldn't be focused on teaching. This forces faculty to expand their main efforts through their research and publication roles, at least until they have attained tenure, highest rank and adequate status among their colleagues. In systems where financial increments based on merit are given after achieving the highest rank, research and scholarly contributions rather than teaching would continue to be regarded, in most cases, as the area to achieve self-efficacy. The following discussion will elaborate this phenomenon.

The system limits the formal structured training of its future faculty to perform mainly as researchers. The negative perceptions and attitudes about teaching start at this stage. Potential faculty may receive "informal training" as teaching assistants. Such training is regarded as an apprentice system. Apprentice systems of training, are not considered formal training in the modern sense, but have their own structure that includes the close and intensive supervision of an expert in the area in which the training is done. This, however, is not the case in universities. Moreover, teaching assistants have to perform the task of diagnosticians of learning difficulties, do remedial teaching, clarify and simplify their sponsor professors' teaching. In general, they do not have the skills to perform this task, are not prepared professionally to perform it, and do not receive close supervision or help while performing it. This traumatic experience plays an important role in their induction and acculturation into the academic world and very vividly signals the low status of teaching in the university. During this acculturation process, they may even encounter direct expressions of negative attitudes towards teaching.

As a faculty developer, the author was involved in many workshops for teaching assistants. Being short workshops, the main purpose was to convey, through experiential learning, the role that can be played in improving the teaching-learning process. As ironical as it sounds, the success of these workshops caused more harm than good. The concluding sessions were devoted to a discussion about transfer problems from theory to practice. It was there that teaching assistants complained bitterly about their "professor-mentors" who "forced" them to attend these "required" workshops, but discouraged them at the end of each day, when

they met in the lab, from "taking seriously" the many things they had learned. The young assistants proposed to their professors all kinds of ideas and changes, some of which required expenditure of time and effort. This, in turn, could affect the completion of research projects or theses which also involved the professor. At times for his own needs and in other instances for the sake of the young assistants, the professor discouraged any significant expenditure in time and effort, which might have improved the teaching-learning process but prolonged the research.

The next stage in the career of the young faculty member is during his recruitment. This is when he learns that he is recruited mainly because of his potential as a researcher-scholar. By inference, he learns that university teaching is the only high-level profession where there is no need for professional preparation in teaching. Moreover, teaching is not a profession since it does not meet the criteria of professionalism which are formal, structured preparation prior to service and continuing education, training and updating during service. This induction and acculturation process continues through the first years as a young faculty member until tenure, highest possible rank and status among his colleages are all attained. If and when a responsible administrative role is assumed, the faculty then is able to promote and represent the system and its norms. At times, individual faculty may have to change previous convictions about the importance of university teaching because of new roles and the norms attached to these roles.

A case in point is a former dean of a school of education who was appointed as a president of a university. Once appointed he had to relinquish many of his previous opinions about the teaching-learning process in the university and the need for formal pretraining of university teachers to bow to the accepted norms.

In concluding the discussion on the university organization it would seem proper to state that the university "forces" its faculty to adopt its norms, expand their main efforts, and fulfil their self-efficacy expectations through their research, scholarship and publication. As a result, most view their teaching role as ancillary to their main role, and even if their initial motivation was different, they are acculturated to view it this way.

In discussions on the motivation of professors to teach effectively, Bess (1982) notes that advocates of intrinsic motivation neglect to recognize the power of the acculturation process, group pressure and group norms. The problem is even more acute than lack of financial or social rewards. The threat of being ridiculed or tagged as a "teacher" creates negative motivation towards teaching improvement. Nisbet (1967) describes this feeling:

> The once familiar characterization of a faculty member as a good teacher but a poor research man is very likely to be fatal in the university today. . . As one very candid assistant professor once put it to me in a letter: "I hope I never get labeled in any student or faculty evaluation as a good man with undergraduates. Until my research record is unchallengeable, I can get farther by dull teaching of undergraduates. This will at least leave open the possibility that my research promise may therefore be high." (p. 27)

Hall and Bazerman (1982) describe a similar climate in one elite university, in which:

> Power is based on one's stature in the research arena. Rewards (promotion and tenure) are primarily based on publication of high quality, high impact research and theory. Poor teaching does not disqualify one, and through a form of reverse snobbery low course evaluation may be seen as a sign that one is intellectually demanding and not about to compromise one's standards to satisfy students. (p. 77)

From the discussion above, one may assume that the main problem arises from the dichotomy between research and teaching roles, thus confining the problem to research-oriented institutions. If this would have been the case, then teachers in community colleges and liberal arts colleges, who, in general, do not have any research obligation, would find teaching as the focus of their self-efficacy expectation. This does not seem to be the case. There too, teachers and faculty may have attitudes towards teaching which are similar to, although not not as extreme as, those held by faculty in research-oriented institutions. In fact, training for teaching among liberal arts college faculty provides the same experiences described above. Even community college teachers and other post secondary teachers are expected to have an academic degree and in many cases doctorates in their respected disciplines. But as far as their teaching role they receive the same professional preparation and acculturation as their colleagues in universities.

It seems that the root of the problem lies in the low status of teaching in post secondary education in general and in the "axiomatic" notion that knowing the subject matter qualifies the specialist to teach it. Thus, the greater the expertise the better the teaching. If this mystical axiomatic notion is not realized and the specialist is not an excellent teacher, or even if he is a poor teacher, it is the student's problem and not his. Moreover, faculty realizes that the system allows "non-professional" teachers to engage in teaching. Thus, poor low quality, amateurish performance becomes the system's problem and not the teacher's.

Wilson (1967) suggests that even though teaching is one of the main functions of the university, it is not honored on the campus. He adopts

Plato's observation that, "What is honored in a country will be cultivated there," and says:

> If teaching is honored on our campuses, it will be cultivated there and will finally be done well there. If it does not find honor, expressed in the respect and prestige granted the teacher by his colleagues and by the dollars paid him by the comptroller, it is not likely to be cultivated nor to improve. (p. 9)

Reference was made above to university faculty as "amateurs" in the teaching role, but it is interesting to note that there is a growing trend among amateurs in different areas such as sports, performing arts, hobbies and other skilled activities, to recognize the need to improve their performance through professional help. In most cases, the amateurs even pay for this professional help. A university professor who was also an enthusiastic tennis player boasted about the time, effort and money he spent on improving his performance on the tennis court. He was especially proud of his coach's innovative training methods, using video feedback in skill training. When advised that he could get similar professional help including video feedback to improve his teaching performance, he raised his eyebrows and rejected the whole idea, stating that "there is no need for it. Teaching is an art. Teachers are born. Either you have the skills or you don't, and anyhow, the system does not view teaching seriously."

The perfection of skills and performance through professional structured help is accepted today in almost all human behaviors including those which until now were considered innate. Unfortunately, teaching in post secondary institutions has not yet reached this stage.

The assumption that professors in colleges, universities and other post secondary institutions do not see teaching as the locus for their

self-efficacy expectations and achievement motivation, leads to the second assumption that feedback about their effectiveness in the teaching role will not be as effective, or effective at all, in modifying their attitudes and behaviors. There might be exceptions to this general assumption. As described above, in institutions which take account of student feedback in administrative decisions about tenure promotion and merit, untenured professors in lower ranks might be concerned. But these concerns do not always lead to real significant improvement. In some cases, these improvement efforts lead to practices which could even be considered unethical. Fortunately, there will always be some conscientious faculty members who respect and like the teaching role in spite of the non-rewarding attitude of the system, and who will accept the feedback in a positive manner. However, in general it stands to reason that this feedback would be more effective if teaching would have higher status on the campus.

For a better and more analytical understanding of professors' perceptions, reactions and coping mechanisms with student feedback it is possible to apply certain concepts described above from attribution theories. Heider's (1958) and Rotter's (1966) internal-external classification of causality, refered to as "locus of control," and Weiner's (1982) further modification and elaboration of this concept as a two dimensional classification, could be applied to the way professors perceive and react to students' feedback. Several more dimensions could be added during the analysis to these two basic dimensions. The basic dimension is an internal-external locus of control or causality and the quality of the feedback, that is, positive or negative, success or failure. The dimension of internal-external control is broad and in our

case this dichotomy refers not only to the teaching situation but to the feedback process itself. Thus for example, a professor may control the feedback process. That is, he initiates it, controls its format, and the collection and analysis of the information, and determines whether and how this information will be released to outside agencies. If the students' feedback is positive it stands to reason that he will attribute the successes to himself, to his natural, innate abilities, to his effortless performance or to the efforts he invested in his teaching, in spite of the non-rewarding attitudes of the system. In some cases, he may share the attribution of success with the students, "who are so good, talented, motivated" and so on. In other cases, he might attribute it also to the subject matter, which may seem at face value to be external, but which excites him and draws out his best performance. There is no doubt that in general, this positive feedback will be rewarding and gratifying.

The basic question, however, is whether this successful achievement will motivate the person to expend more effort in his teaching roles and to set new, higher targets and challenges, to increase his expectations for self-efficacy in the role. Given the status of teaching in higher education and the resulting attitudes of faculty, it is doubtful whether this hypothetical professor will follow this direction. In meeting some of these "born teachers" who are in many cases also good or excellent researchers, tenured and at the top of their rank, it could be assumed that success in teaching will increase their appetite for greater success. But in general this was not the case. Some of them claimed that their success just proves the point that teaching is not a profession: "You are born with it." Those who conceded that it is

possible to improve their basic, innate talent claimed that the efforts are not worthwhile, and that the improvement may be marginal. Morever, the system does not respect it, or reward it. "My main interests are often all in research, it is there where I put most of my efforts and luckily enough I am considered a good teacher without investing too many efforts." Some of them even used the argument that excellence in teaching "may spoil their students".

At the other extreme is the case of negative feedback obtained from external controls. The person involved may not be a partner to its initiation, to the process of determining the format or the methods of collecting and analyzing the information, and the way it was being transmitted to himself and others. It might even be published by the administration or the student's organization without his consent. In this case the person may attribute all of the causes for failure to external forces beyond his control: "It's the system fault in the first place". The target becomes the system which didn't train him to be a teacher, didn't recruit him on this basis, don't reward it, etc. Thus, even when he admits his own faults, he blames the system for them.

Another external target is the students. "They are giving me feedback about my teaching, but do they know how to learn, are they able to learn?" As was stated above, the importance of students' role in the teaching learning process is underestimated by the students, the system and even by faculty developers. This, in itself, is another good reason to attribute failures and frustrations to others. In between these two extremes are a variety of other cases with different emphases and different variations on the basic dimensions discussed.

In the above discussion, an attempt was made to point out how certain concepts and theories could facilitate a better understanding of the effectiveness of student feedback in improving the teaching-learning process. Given the limits of this paper it was not intended to be a detailed comprehensive discussion of the application of these concepts and theories, but to illustrate the benefits of applying them to the analysis.

Towards Effective Faculty Development Programs

This paper focuses on instructional evaluation. The discussion of effective faculty development programs will be restricted, therefore, to illustrating the intensive nature of these programs, as compared with the limited scope of conventional instructional evaluation.

As stated earlier, university teaching, in contrast to other professions, does not have any pre-service, professional preparation for the teaching role (Belger and Cooper, 1950; Bess, 1982). Faculty development programs were always conducted in-service and very short in duration. Until the mid 1960's most of these programs were cognitive information oriented. They were mainly patterned after the cognitive components of traditional teacher education programs. Traditional pre-service teacher education programs also contained an experiential component of practice teaching. Even though this component was limited in scope and not always efficient, it was and still is regarded by many teachers in training as the most meaningful component in their program.

Similar experiential components are included in the curriculum of other professions such as medicine and law. Recognizing the importance of

the experiential component in professional education, medical educators, for example, are giving it greater attention. It is being introduced as early as possible in the curriculum, and efforts are being made to expand its scope and improve its effectiveness.

Faculty development programs never contained an experiential component, similar to supervised student teaching in teacher education or supervised clinical experience and practicums in other professions. The university system has always viewed the first years of teaching as the "practicum". As a matter of fact, it was even considered as a substitute to any formal training. However, in view of the fact that in most cases, this "practicum" never had intensive supervision, it should be considered an experience in trial and error, rather than an effective clinical experience.

As of the mid 1960's, significant changes occurred in traditional teacher education programs, which also had an impact on faculty development programs. The emphasis on supervised practice teaching has increased and a new kind of experiential learning has been introduced in the form of teaching-learning simulation laboratories that preceded field experience. Practice in these laboratories included: microteaching, video self-confrontation techniques, concept-based training, protocol materials and other experiential techniques. The teaching-learning simulation laboratory in teacher education, utilizing a variety of the above techniques, also opened new possibilities for experiential learning in faculty development programs.

Perlberg (1970, 1972, 1974, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1981, 1983) has used extensively the teaching-learning laboratory in both faculty development and teacher education and emphasized the role of video self-confrontation

in the process. Similar approaches have been adopted in faculty development by Melnik (1972), Koffman (1973), Noam (1973) and others.

In reviewing the recent research on interventions to improve instruction in higher education, Levison-Rose and Menges (1981), among others, refer to workshops, seminars, practice with feedback, minicourses, microteaching and concept-based training. It is interesting to note that most of the studies reviewed by them are from teacher education. In comparing practice-based training, such as microteaching, with concept-based practice and, in particular with discrimination training which is more cognitive oriented, Levinson-Rose and Menges suggest that the latter "appear promising and are less costly, disruptive and intimidating" then the former. The rationale for their preference--"less costly, disruptive and intimidating"--is interesting since the research literature on experiential learning in various settings suggest that confrontation techniques, which are perceived as disruptive and intimidating, or in Lewin's (1948) terminology, unfreezing and deautomatizing, have a better chance of achieving change than the cognitive centered interventions (Fuller & Manning, 1974; Perlberg, 1976,1978; Fryrear & Fleshman, 1981). In summarizing the research on workshops and seminars, Levinson-Rose and Menges (1981) state that:

> Workshops and seminars are useful to motivate and to raise consciousness under certain conditions. But most workshops and seminars, even those with specific training goals, are unlikely to produce lasting changes in teacher behavior or lasting impact on students unless participants continue skill practice and receive critical feedback on their efforts. (p. 419)

This conclusion is of special significance since it emphasizes the importance of interventions which achieve more than cognitive and attitudinal change. They emphasize the need for added consultation to

instructional evaluation and intensive skill training with critical feedback, in addition to the cognitive modes of intervention.

The discussion above focused on the interventions which have the potential of achieving behavioral change in the training. However, the real issue is whether there is transfer from the simulated training to the natural setting--the classroom.

Joyce and Showers (1980, 1981, 1982) view the "transfer" phenomenon as the crucial issue in training research. In an extensive review of the literature, they were concerned with questions of how teachers acquire skills and strategies, and how they integrate them into their active repertoire. Their first observation is that the majority of investigations measure the acquisition of knowledge and skills and "only a few of even the better studies determine whether those skills are integrated into the teacher's active repertoire so that they persist over a long period of time".

From an analysis of their own research on training, Joyce and Showers conclude that a combination of a study of theories, observation of demonstrations, and intensive practice with intensive structured feedback, which includes video feedback, modeling, and discrimination-training (provided they are all of high quality), have helped most teacher trainees acquire the targeted skills. Moreover, novice teachers mastered these skills sufficiently so that they were able to use the new skill fluidly and appropriately when called on to do so. However, Joyce and Showers state that:

> the development of skill by itself does not ensure transfer and relatively few persons, having obtained skill in new approaches to teaching will then transfer that skill into their active repertoire and use the new approaches regularly and sensibly unless additional instruction is received. (pp. 2-3)

In this context, it would be appropriate to mention Levinson-Rose and Menges' (1981) conclusion that concept-based practice and, in particular, discrimination-training appear to be more promising. The question, however, is whether this type of training is sufficient not only to acquire ne teaching skills and strategies but also to transfer to them from the training setting to the classroom. According to Joyce and Showers this is not enough. Moreover, in their review Levinson-Rose and Menges did not refer at all to the intensity of the training program, especially as it relates to the optimal training time one needs to devote to the acquisition and transfer of new skills. An examination of the relatively few experiential faculty development training programs will reveal that these generally are short in duration and weak in intensity as compared with training programs in other settings, such as in teacher education. The usual explanation given to this phenomenon is the difficulty of motivating faculty to invest more time in these programs. In recent years there has also been a financial constraint which determined the length and intensity of many training programs. While faculty developers cannot be expected to do more than can be done in any given situation, it is important for them to realize the magnititude of the investment that has to be made in order for someone to acquire proficiency in new skills for transfer into the natural settings.

In discussing optimal training programs, Joyce and Showers state that:

> Most preservice and inservice teacher training has used incredibly weak training. When we think of a model of teaching of average difficulty, we assume that the study of theory will have to occupy as much as twenty or thirty hours (complex models require much more than that). At least fifteen or twenty demonstrations should be observed of the model being used both with various kinds of learners of various characteristics and

> also in several content areas. Demonstrations also need to be included when teachers are trying the model for the first time, when they are introducing students to the model, and when they are trying to learn how to teach it to them. Third, the attainment of competence requires quite a number of practice sessions. Each teacher needs to try the model with peers and small groups of students from ten to fifteen times before a high level of skill begins to be produced. If the transfer process has been forecast it makes good sense to teachers to want to build the highest level of skill they can before using the model in the more complex context of the classroom. (p. 5)

Based on their extensive review of the literature, Joyce and Shower claim that most experiential programs were effective in helping trainees acquire sets of skills and strategies of teaching, but only five to ten percent of the students could transfer these skills to natural settings. This percentage was true in programs which attained close to 100% success in the acquisition of skills during the training. Joyce and Showers attribute this phenomenon to the absence of "forecasting the processes of transfer", and "transfer skills", which they refer to as "executive control". Executive control is defined by them as the "meta understanding" of a set of principles that enables one to actively consider the optimal relations and strategies of transfer, that can be applied to the teaching-learning process.

The problem, however, is even more complicated. Although the development of these skills may increase the probability of transfer it will not assure the persistence of the new behavior in the natural setting or the perseverance of the skills in face of pressure. To achieve this, there is a need for a continuous coaching process and a "coaching environment" in which all persons involved see themselves as providing companionship and giving technical feedback to facilitate the analysis of application and adaptation problems.

The limits of this paper do not enable further elaboration of the results of training research and its implication for faculty development programs. At this stage, it will suffice to point out that there is a large gap between the simplistic notion that instructional evaluation can achieve significant behavioral changes and what was described above as interventions which have a chance of achieving that goal.

Concluding Remarks

McLuhan's concept that the "medium is the message", the purpose of this paper was to point out that in the case of instructional evaluation the "medium is not the message". The "message" is facilitating better learning through improved teaching-learning processes. This is a complicated task which directly involves three partners: the students, the teachers and the system. Achieving better learning requires significant interventions with all three partners.

The "medium" is a combination of mutually dependent, significant interventions which, when coupled together and introduced in optimal ways, could facilitate the achievement of the "message". Feedback, as described and analyzed by various theories, could be viewed as one such significant intervention. It could help facilitate the process, if provided in optimal ways. But feedback in itself cannot substitute for the combination of several significant interventions. Morever, student feedback, as obtained and transmitted to faculty in traditional instructional evaluation programs, cannot be considered a significant and effective intervention. This conclusion has been supported by ample research evidence.

Unfortunately, in many institutions of higher learning, students' feedback is being perceived as the "message" itself in spite of contradictory evidence. This phenomenon casts ethical and moral dilemmas on the system as a whole and on its faculty developers. Moreover, the greater danger is that belief in this concept will perpetuate itself. It will serve as a tranquilizer to ease the system's frustration in face of mounting pressures for accountability. Those involved in that practice will become addicted to it. Even if conditions change and opportunities to introduce more significant interventions occur, the traditional concept of equating instructional evaluation with faculty development might prevail. For the sake of their own integrity, it is essential that faculty developers and instructional evaluators will be able to face the evidence about the effectiveness of student feedback and relay it to the system.

The paper pointed out what could be considered significant interventions that could facilitate the improvement of teaching-learning processes. Whether and how these could be implemented in the present situation is beyond the scope of this paper.

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